

Virginia M. Barry, Ph.D.
Commissioner of Education
Tel. 603-271-3144



Paul Leather
Deputy Commissioner of Education
Tel. 603-271-3801

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
101 Pleasant Street
Concord, N.H. 03301
FAX 603-271-1953
Citizens Services Line 1-800-339-9900**

Dear Parent/Guardian:

This spring, your child participated in a new state assessment in English language arts/literacy (ELA) and mathematics known as Smarter Balanced. These online assessments were designed to replace the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) in the same subject areas. These new assessments move away from fill-in-the bubble tests and ask questions that require students to explain their reasoning. The state has set high learning expectations for what students should learn and be able to do at each grade level so that by the time they graduate from high school, they are ready to succeed in college and the workplace.

Assessments are like academic checkups. They help teachers and parents see where students are compared to where they need to be. The results can reveal areas where a student is excelling and subject areas where a student needs extra help. This information can provide a great opportunity to have meaningful discussions with your child's teacher and principal about helping your child succeed in school.

Your child's score, as well as the school and district averages, may look lower this year. These new assessments measure more complex, real-world skills such as critical-thinking, writing and problem solving. These scores cannot be compared to previous assessment scores. Instead, they are setting a new, more accurate baseline from which progress can be measured moving forward.

I hope you will find that the attached report provides you with additional and more detailed information about your child's learning. Each subject is broken down into categories of skills and content to identify where a student needs additional support and where he or she has mastered the content and should be challenged to go deeper into the subject matter. Your child's current teacher(s) also receives these assessment results. We encourage you to talk to them for additional information on how your child is performing in class as well as discuss how your child can be further supported in school.

We appreciate your patience this year as we transition to a new assessment that we believe will more accurately measure how students are on track to ensure they are prepared to achieve their full potential.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Virginia M. Barry".

Virginia M. Barry Ph.D.
Commissioner of Education